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ABSTRACT

This theme issue focuses on motivating young people to learn by providing leadership opportunities in school. "Coca-Cola Valued Youth Program: Assessing Progress" (Josie Danini Supik) examines the program's success. This program, which trains high-risk middle and high school students as tutors of younger children, has dramatically lowered dropout rates and discipline problems among participants while increasing their achievement and self-esteem. "Youth Leadership: Great Works in Progress" (Aurelio M. Montemayor, Josie Danini Supik) proposes a new leadership training program to create local teams of students who would participate in community service learning projects and in school decision making and reform efforts. "How Do I Value You? Let Me Count the Ways" (Aurelio M. Montemayor) describes traditional and nontraditional ways of valuing students and offers examples of student-centered activities that enhance student self-worth and provide incentives for staying in school. "Valued Youths: Six Years Later" (Conchi Salas) profiles two student success stories from the Coca-Cola Valued Youth Program. This issue also contains two articles unrelated to the theme. "IDRA's Latest Attrition Analyses Show Worsening Dropout Problem" (Roy Johnson) reports that the percentage of students lost from Texas public high school enrollment between their 9th-grade and 12-grade years was 40 percent for the period ending 1994-95, compared to 33 percent for the period 1985-86. This finding contradicts the Texas Education Agency's recent report of steadily declining dropout rates. Tables detail high school completion and dropout rates for the states; attrition rates for Blacks, Whites, and Hispanics in Texas counties; and Texas attrition and enrollment data for racial/ethnic groups. "Silent Partners in Education" (Conchi Salas) discusses the importance of schools recognizing and valuing the educational contributions of parents and families. Nine additional readings on youth leadership are listed. (SV)

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INTERCULTURAL DEVELOPMENT RESEARCH ASSOCIATION

IDRA Newsletter

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IDRA's Latest Attrition Analyses Show Worsening Dropout Problem

Roy Johnson, M.S.

In August, the Intercultural Development Research Association (IDRA) released its attrition analyses for the 1994-95 school year. These analyses were conducted to estimate the number of students lost from Texas public school enrollment prior to graduation from high school.

Since conducting the first comprehensive study of school dropouts in the state in 1986, IDRA has continued to perform its attrition analyses to monitor the status of school dropouts in the state (Cárdenas, et. al., 1986). This article presents the findings from IDRA's latest analyses for the 1994-95 school year. The study looked at enrollment figures for high school students in Texas public high schools at the ninth grade level in the 1991-92 school year and at the 12th grade level in 1994-95. This four-year period represent the time span that a ninth grade student in 1991-92 would be enrolled in school.

During the 1991-92 school year, there were 284,621 students enrolled in the ninth grade. Of those, 0.2 percent were Native American, 2.1 percent were Asian American, 35.9 percent were Hispanic, 14.7 percent were Black or African American, and 47.1 percent were White.

High school enrollment (grades nine through 12) was 887,978 during the school year. Of those students, 0.2 percent were Native American, 2.4 percent were Asian American, 32.5 percent were Hispanic, 13.7 percent were African American, and 51.2 percent were White (see table on Page 15).

Three years later, the 12th grade enrollment was comprised of 183,504 students. Of this number, 0.2 percent were Native American, 3.1 percent were Asian American, 30.3 percent were Hispanic, 12.5 percent were African American, and 54.0 percent were White.

High school enrollment (grades nine through 12) was 955,245 during the school year. Of those students, 0.2 percent were Native American, 2.6 percent were Asian American, 33.6 percent were Hispanic, 14.0 percent were African American, and 49.9 percent were White (see table on Page 15).

Major Findings of the Attrition Analyses

Based on the results of IDRA's analyses, about 122,700 students were lost from public high school enrollment between their ninth grade year in 1991-92 and their 12th grade year in 1994-95. The major findings are presented below.

The rate of attrition has increased over the period of 1985-86 to 1994-95. The rate of attrition in public high school enrollment increased from 33 percent in 1985-86 to 40 percent in 1994-95. This represents a 21 percent increase over the 10-year study period (see table on top of Page 15).

In contrast, the Texas Education Agency (TEA) found, in its most recent study, that the *annual dropout rate* in the state's public education system declined consistently from 6.7 percent in 1987-88 to 2.8 percent in 1992-93. Based on the self-reports of school districts through the Public Education Information System (PEIMS), the number of school dropouts has declined consistently from the 1987-88 school year, the first report on dropouts developed by TEA, to the 1992-93 school year, the most recent report published by TEA.

Attrition Analyses - continued on page 12

IDRA is an independent nonprofit advocacy organization dedicated to improving educational opportunity. Through research, materials development, training, technical assistance, evaluation, and information dissemination, we're helping to create schools that work for all children.

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Popularized in the early 1970s by author Thomas Kuhn, "paradigms" are our models or patterns of reality, shaped by our understanding and experience into a system of rules and assumptions about the world around us. The call for restructuring in education, emerging from a profound sense that education is not working for all children, requires a transformation in how we see schools, students, and their families. If we are to find a new and equitable vision of what education can and should be, new lenses are required to change the way we look at schools and the populations in them – as demonstrated by our "Now" thinkers below.

THAT IS THEN . . . THIS IS NOW...

"The lower classes should be guided, not educated."
- Voltaire

"Up here, we don't take no guff from kids. We aren't paid to take any lipping off. If a kid gets smart, he gets clobbered. That's the way we do it."
- principal in New York. Quoted in *The Last Resort*, 1995

"Interpretively, the brighter dropouts may go back to get a GED, but they continue to share in common with the permanent dropouts a lower-class social background that has not inculcated a work ethic that makes for success in the labor force."
- Richard Herrnstein and Charles Murray, *The Bell Curve*, 1994

"A closer look at [our] numbers dispels the stereotype of the high school dropout as the bright but unlucky youngster whose talents are wasted because of economic disadvantage or a school system that cannot hold onto him – the stereotype that people have in mind when they lament the American dropout rate because it is frittering away the nation's human capital...The permanent dropout instead fits the older image of the youngster who is both not very smart and from the wrong side of the tracks."
- Richard Herrnstein and Charles Murray, *The Bell Curve*, 1994

"All who have meditated on the art of governing mankind have been convinced that the fate of empires depends on the education of youth."
- Aristotle

"The youth population has been misnamed the self-centered generation. There's a strong desire to serve others. The problem we face in America today is not a lack of willingness to serve or help others but to find the appropriate outlet for this."
- George Gallup, 1987

"There is no socially responsible, productive and connected role for young people in most societies, certainly in the United States: few jobs, no real policy-making leadership, no positions of political power, no high expectations of young people's contribution to society."
- John Bell, YouthBuild. Quoted in *A New Vision: Promoting Youth Development*, September 1991

"I have personal knowledge of the success of young Hispanics going into the field of education. We need many more, as role models for Hispanic children."
- Ardis Gonzales, letter to editor, *Hispanic*, September 1995

"Youth development programs are the most effective and least expensive child welfare in the world."
- Philip Coltoff, executive director, Children's Aid Society. Quoted in *Youth Today*, July-August 1995

SPOTLIGHT ON ASSESSMENT

Like other children, students whose first language is other than English bring a wealth of knowledge and experience to school. But historically, standardized tests have provided little or no useful information about these students' language or cognitive abilities. The use of assessment and testing data has too often been limited to holding students accountable, offering little or no help to guide improvement efforts or foster collective accountability. IDRA works with all parties that have a vested interest in the educational outcomes produced by the schools – the students, the educational practitioners, the families and the broader community – to use data to frame solutions, monitor progress *and* hold all of the participants involved in the educational process accountable for the end results. IDRA is helping schools find solutions to traditional methods of testing and assessment, enabling students from diverse backgrounds to become empowered learners.

COCA-COLA VALUED YOUTH PROGRAM: ASSESSING PROGRESS

Josie Danini Supik, M.A.

It is mid-October and you are in your classroom early one morning reviewing your eighth graders' achievement test scores when one of your students enters the room. You have known "Mark"* since he was in grade school. Back then, he seemed full of energy and promise, not like his older brother who had dropped out of high school. You have heard that Mark's brother is working for minimum wage and is trying to earn his GED.

Now it seems as if Mark is following in his brother's footsteps. He was having so much trouble with math that he had to repeat the seventh grade. It is not that he is a troublemaker; you would almost welcome that. Trying to get him to even answer one question aloud in class is like pulling teeth. That was one of the reasons you put him in the Coca-Cola Valued Youth Program. If this does not work, you are sure he will not make it through high school.

But this morning, he walks over to your desk and hands you a wad of paper. You open it and find a bullet. You begin to speak when he tells you that he had planned to use it the night before, but he had stopped when he remembered that his tutees would be waiting for him today, waiting for him to tutor them. He wants you to keep the bullet. He will not be needing it anymore.

Mark is one of 2500 middle and high school students who have been reached by the Coca-Cola Valued Youth Program since 1990. That was the year that The Coca-Cola Foundation awarded $1.35 million to the Intercultural Development Research Association (IDRA) to expand the program to 10 elementary and secondary schools in Texas, New York, Florida and California over five years.

Now, fast forward to 1995, and the Coca-Cola Valued Youth Program is in not just 10 but 54 schools, and it is slated to begin in 20 more schools later this fall. The reasons for this explosive growth have been outlined before in the *IDRA Newsletter* (see Supik, 1994) with descriptions of linkages across central office and the secondary and elementary campuses, clear roles and responsibilities for all stakeholders (students, teachers, administrators and parents), efficient evaluation and monitoring, quick affective changes, financial compensation for the work done, families as valued partners, and a student-centered curriculum.

In the five years of IDRA's partnership with The Coca-Cola Foundation, this program has reached more than 17,000 tutors and tutees, parents, teachers, and administrators. And it has cost less than $250 per student to operate this program – that includes the training and technical assistance, monitoring and evaluation, tutors' stipends and materials needed. This translates to approximately $17 per week for 15 weeks of work for each tutor, less than a meal for four at McDonald's.

How Does the Program Work?

The program is grounded in IDRA's core belief that "*all* students are valuable; none is expendable." It takes the inherent value in students, parents and educators and brings it forth through new connections and experiences. Tutors become role models for their tutees in the elementary schools. Teachers begin to see the contributions these students make to their schools and communities. Parents begin to hear wonderful things about their children. Administrators see students succeeding.

How Do We Know it Works?

Since its inception in 1984, the program has been rigorously researched and evaluated. After a longitudinal study in 1987, IDRA had the empirical evidence needed for determining which of the program's

Coca-Cola VYP - continued on page 8

**Name changed for privacy*

EFFECTS OF THE COCA-COLA VALUED YOUTH PROGRAM

One tutor was absent only 19 days one year. The previous year (pre-Valued Youth), he was absent 129 days (four months).

One student increased his grades by more than 10 points in mathematics, reading and English. This same student also decreased visits to the principal's office from 19 to five and went from 51 days absent the previous year to zero.

"Now that I am in ninth grade, I feel it's going to take a lot of effort to succeed and become a better student in high school. Being a tutor has helped me to become more responsible and this will help me in the long run; not only through high school, but throughout my life."

– Juan Gordillo, quoted in *Coca-Cola Valued Youth Program Mentor's Tips for Success in High School, August 1994*

IDRA challenges practices and firmly-held beliefs regarding the education of children. Instead of viewing readiness as an intrinsic, child characteristic which must be assessed to determine whether that child can benefit from certain school experiences, readiness is views as external to the child and tied to teacher beliefs. IDRA's concept of professional development is based on valuing, of self and others – it is the valuing of self and of colleagues as teachers and as adults with much to offer with a vision and a hope to make a difference in children's lives. We believe that all teachers bring strengths to the profession and that all are capable of both excellence and improvement. IDRA assists people to create educational solutions through innovative, participatory, and hands-on presentations, workshops and technical assistance that promote sustained growth and development. With this principle that encourages unity rather than uniformity, our assistance values the cultures of our participants and acknowledges their experiences.

YOUTH LEADERSHIP: GREAT WORKS IN PROGRESS

Aurelio M. Montemayor, M.Ed. and Josie Danini Supik, M.A.

Youth leadership is essential to make schools work for all children. Meaningful leadership experiences motivate young people and accelerate their learning. When schools integrate such opportunities in a well-planned and supported curriculum, they often find that students come alive and shine.

These opportunities have traditionally been reserved for too few and narrowly identified students who are considered to have "earned" the opportunities through good behavior, acceptable grades and English proficiency. Recent experiments extending leadership opportunities to students who seem headed for trouble or incomplete educations, have shown the consistently positive results: Students are re-energized and radiant.

In the box below, the quotes, taken from the script written by students about their experience as tutors, validate the Intercultural Development Research Association's (IDRA) 11-year experience with the Coca-Cola Valued Youth Program. Students chosen for the program are not those typically selected for leadership roles on campuses. Our faith in all students is confirmed every year in our many program participants. But IDRA does not purport to turn all middle school students into tutors. This program simply illustrates one successful way to give young adolescents a position of leadership, and the results have been consistently positive. A principal recently asked us, "When are you coming by so that we can design a service learning program that has the Coca-Cola Valued Youth Program impact?"

More is needed to have students work with others to transform their schools. Students are isolated, tracked and segregated by language proficiency, economics, ethnicity and race, perceived academic aptitude, and neighborhood. Most leadership training models are individualistic and elitist, so that even if non-traditional students are participants, the experience continues the isolation even though the individual's chances for success are greatly increased.

Students generally are not in the circle of influence in school decisions and are fundamentally seen as passive recipients of instruction, course content, curriculum, scheduling, and promotion or retention. Youth are seen as incomplete adults and therefore not capable of making decisions that affect their daily lives and their future. In fact, there seems to be a general fear of giving students autonomy and a voice in essential school decisions.

IDRA is searching for schools to extend the "valuing model" beyond our current cross-age tutoring program. We hope to work with teachers and administrators to set up a variety of activities that are centered around student leadership and service learning and that model the valuing of students to take students to new heights of responsibility, critical thinking and empowerment. (See Page 6 for a variety of examples of student leadership projects and programs.) One way that IDRA wants to work with schools is outlined below. Any takers?

Developing Youth Leaders

IDRA envisions a national community of diverse youth leaders who actively create

Youth Leadership - continued on page 5

MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENTS TELL OF THEIR EXPERIENCES IN THE COCA-COLA VALUED YOUTH PROGRAM

Liz: "How did this program help you?"

Eric: "I will always remember my experiences as a tutor because it was cool in the way it helped me accomplish my goals."

Claudia: "I felt I had an important job and had to be responsible."

Paul: "I was treated as an adult and as if I was a teacher. This program helped me mature – gave me patience and made me responsible."

Maria: "What I will always remember about this program will be the great times I had with my tutees and how much I helped them to make better grades."

Angie: "Working with children helped me control my temper."

Claudia: "I had one kid that used to misbehave. I tutored him for two whole years because no one else could handle him as well as I could."

Javier: "I will never forget my tutees, my friends and my teachers. I feel good because I want to be a teacher and this gave me some experience."

Daisy: "I'll always remember how attached I got to a little pre-kinder boy and how attached he got to me. His teacher told me that he didn't want to do anything when I wasn't around. It was very hard for me to say goodbye on the last day of tutoring. I'll never forget him."

Source: Video script written by Valued Youth Tutors in Brownsville, Texas, August 1994.

News About IDRA's Coca-Cola Valued Youth Program

The Coca-Cola Foundation Expansion to Give Program National Visibility

The Coca-Cola Foundation has announced a new commitment to IDRA's Coca-Cola Valued Youth Program to accelerate the national expansion of the program over the next three years. With The Coca-Cola Foundation's grant award of $700,000, IDRA will replicate the program in 12 secondary and elementary schools in Washington, D.C.; St. Louis and Kansas City, Missouri; Atlanta, Georgia; Houston, Texas; and Chicago, Illinois.

This will expand the visibility of the Coca-Cola Valued Youth Program at the national level, and it will keep an additional 10,000 children in school and help these children realize their goals and their potential. Among the goals for this expansion is to contribute to national efforts around community service learning and school-to-work experiences.

Brownsville Takes the Coca-Cola Valued Youth Program District Wide

Working closely with IDRA, the Brownsville school district and its school board approved the continuation and *expansion* of the Coca-Cola Valued Youth Program from four to eight middle schools using district funds, making it the first school district in the country to implement the program district wide. This extraordinary support was due to the program's success over the past four years in Brownsville, Texas, and to IDRA's linkages with schools and the community.

In addition, the Valued Youth Border Schools Initiative, funded by the School Dropout Assistance Program in the U.S. Department of Education and now in its fifth year of operation, includes extensive support services and incorporates peer mentorship.

This year, a refined peer mentorship model will be implemented in two high schools with former tutors continuing their tutoring in the elementary schools and also working with the University of Brownsville on planning and preparing for their future. Professors and student volunteers will work with these mentors to have them focus on their career goals. Mentor coordinators will continue working with the students, but the emphasis will be on preparing them for a successful career.

This pilot will be invaluable for all of the Valued Youth sites as we look at expanding the model to go beyond the middle school and even beyond the high school. A continuous line of support can be created from kindergarten through high school graduation and beyond to college and the world of work.

American Foundation for Children and Youth Contracts for Houston Sites

The American Foundation for Children and Youth, Inc. has awarded a grant to IDRA, through the Rotary International Foundation of Houston, to implement the Coca-Cola Valued Youth Program at one secondary and one elementary school site in the Houston Independent School District.

Youth Leadership *- continued from page 4*

schools of the future for young people today. We propose to develop and implement a leadership training program that accomplishes the following:

- Brings diverse students together (economic class, academic level, ethnicity and geographic area),
- Creates youth spokespersons while supporting their connection to their peers,
- Models collaborative and servant leadership,
- Encourages students to define excellent schools,
- Gives young people autonomy and active roles in decision making,
- Provides tools for critical analysis of schooling, and
- Creates collaborative initiatives designed and implemented by students.

The program will involve students selected from a balance of junior and senior high schools and freshmen and sophomores in college. Ethnic and gender-balanced representation will mirror the ethnic and socio-economic composition in the community.

The youth participants will interact with each other during three meetings (one full day and two evenings). The youths will participate in two-day experiential retreats at the beginning and middle of the school year and a six-week internship with a stipend during the summer. An annual conference for all participants will be held in the spring. All participants will develop teams for local projects. They will design and carry out the projects during the school year and summer.

Critical components of this leadership training program are the following:

- The program relates to transforming and improving schools.
- The program has observable, measurable, time phased objectives and activities.
- The program can be realistically accomplished within a school year.
- The program is youth team developed and owned.

Training will be highly participatory, with increased responsibility given to the participants for content and process as the cycle progresses. Included in the process are participant mini-editorials on self-selected topics, ongoing journals and computer networking to communicate about their projects and about topics central to the training such as leadership, school reform, and diversity and multiculturalism. Major themes include effective schooling, leadership, school structures, accelerating learning for all students, careers, social responsibility and service learning.

As a result of their involvement in IDRA's youth leadership efforts, the following will occur:

- Youth will experience authentic opportunities to serve.
- Participating youth will exhibit clear goals and direction, exercise initiative, give service, take responsibility, and value self and others.
- Schools will accept youth leadership and integrate youth input into central decision making.
- Students will experience engaging, challenging and meaningful activities, have access to information in the real world, and provide immediate and long-term help.
- Students will experience and model collaborative leadership in a diverse and multicultural community.

Youth Leadership *- continued on page 17*

How Do I Value You? Let Me Count the Ways

Aurelio M. Montemayor, M.Ed.

Editor's Note: This article is excerpted from its original appearance in the IDRA Newsletter, *August 1989.*

Dr. José A. Cárdenas, founder [and now director emeritus] of IDRA, summarizes effective dropout prevention programs with the letters *V-S-P: valuing, support* and *parents*. In all successful programs for the education of youth considered at-risk of dropping out of school, a *valuing* of the students occurs in ways in which they are not valued in regular and traditional school programs; *support* mechanisms are much more extensive than those commonly found in regular and traditional situations; and finally, *parents* are involved in meaningful relationships with the school, in relationships not commonly found in regular and traditional situations. This article focuses on the valuing of students.

Barriers to Valuing Students

Students at-risk of dropping out, as a rule, are not selected for positive recognition or for leadership roles. Many are social isolates and are not inclined to participate in traditional school activities. If students are identified for special services, they are usually chosen for something they lack or for dysfunctional behavior. Students and teachers see remediation and correction programs as a stigma.

Teachers and staff resist giving these students responsibility, recognition or leadership roles. Concerns range from fears of rewarding dysfunctional behavior to despair in the student's inability to handle responsibility, follow instructions or behave maturely.

A major breakthrough in the student's life results from experiencing success in school and peer activities. However, such a breakthrough is precluded by the above mentioned prejudices, which lock students and teachers in a vicious cycle: students are not participating in school and are therefore dropping out, and they are dropping out because they are not participating.

Valuing Students

Yet, despite the obstacles, some schools and programs have managed to break that cycle. Students that were formerly considered "problems" have become "solutions." From a gang leader who becomes the protector of the student mural in the school hallway, to the previously failing student who becomes a successful tutor for a younger student and, in the process, succeeds in school. Examples abound from across the United States of ways that "at-risk" students are valued. And this "valuing" directly leads to their success in school.

Traditional and Nontraditional Ways to Value Students

Schools have numerous traditional ways of valuing students including the following:

- Awards for achievement,
- Appointment by faculty to positions of responsibility,
- Election by peers to positions of responsibility in student activities,
- Publicity of achievements through different communications media, and
- Hiring them to assist with school functions and activities.

The challenge is to extend these traditional ways to at-risk students and expand the variety of ways of valuing them.

Examples with Students Considered to be At-Risk

Cross-age Tutoring. Middle- and high-school students in San Antonio school districts tutor elementary students several times a week for an hourly wage.

Peer Counseling. Dropouts who return to high school in Tucson, Arizona, work with school counselors and serve as peer counselors for one period during the regular school day. They also give motivational speeches to incoming freshmen.

Student Artists. Students from the Bronx, New York, who have experienced severe problems in the regular high school setting, learn about literature through artistic renderings of the themes of the world's greatest literature. They produce large canvases and works of art and sell them for significant amounts of money, which fund the continuation of their projects.

Student Scientists. Underachieving students in science from Roosevelt High School are selected as part of a team with a mobile science lab and make the wonders of the physical and biological world come alive for East Los Angeles, California, elementary students.

Health Leaders. A group of female middle-school students in Brownsville, Texas, after discussing the problems of drug-abuse, decide to form their own "Just Say No" club. Most of them had been considered by their teachers to be the most prone to abuse drugs, but the club is formed at the students' own initiative.

Video Production. Students in the San Antonio area improve written and oral communication skills while producing quality and high-interest television programs.

Abuse Prevention. South Texas students, themselves considered at-risk of abusing drugs and alcohol, become group leaders in educating their peers about the adverse effects of drug and alcohol use.

Peer Mentors. Junior-high and high-school students in Austin, Texas, become big brothers and sisters to younger students and motivate, counsel and sometimes even tutor them.

Social Scientists. Students from economically disadvantaged backgrounds in rural Appalachia document their community's local folkloric traditions and other sociological phenomena. They produce a series of journals sold in major bookstores. A Spanish-dominant teenager in Tucson, Arizona, without previous experience in any aspect of television production and minimal success in the regular classroom, plans and executes a televised interview of the director of a historical building in Tucson.

Newsletter Publishers. A fifth-grade class that had developed a reputation for "chewing up" teachers, feared even by substitutes and without a permanent teacher for the first six weeks, publishes a bilingual newsletter with original articles, poetry and art by the students themselves.

These specific examples are representative, but not exhaustive of possible ways to value students. Student-centered activities explicitly designed to strengthen the students' self-worth offer strong incentives for students to remain in school. The underlying premises of such activities are that the student contains vast and

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How Do I Value You - continued from page 6

untapped potential, can help peers in many ways, can lead other students, and can excel in a variety of traditional and nontraditional ways.

Consider the variety of options. Create alternative leadership roles for students and consider a wide array of roles. A useful framework for devising ways to value students includes the following:

- **Curriculum Builders** – having students develop instructional materials for their peers or younger students through group tasks, community surveys, documentation of peer feelings and experiences, conducting taped interviews, creating and cataloging artistic endeavors, and using applied mechanics or carpentry.
- **Teachers** – tutoring peers, younger students and adults.
- **Communicators** – publishing newsletters or student literature, developing public service announcements for media, directing and managing student assemblies, organizing and leading student clubs.
- **Resources for Youth** – counseling or mentoring students, staffing hotlines for runaways or other troubled youth, mediating youth-to-youth and youth-to-adult conflicts, polling peers about issues of concern.
- **Community Services** – assisting in social service programs, planning and conducting community beautification projects, raising money for service projects.

If you are a principal: Identify a willing and eager teacher who has already shown success with "at-risk" students. Review the array of options. Start small. Encourage. Give it time. Expect surprises. Observe all successes keenly and give recognition.

If you are a teacher: Plan your activity and approach the principal with a feasible plan. Clearly define your objectives and know how they relate to keeping kids in school and learning.

If you are a parent: Identify a willing teacher and together forge a plan, or approach the principal with a realistic plan.

Ultimately, all students are valuable; None is expendable. For many reasons, some seem harder to value than others. Yet there are countless adults who bear witness to the tremendous positive resource that children are valuable, though they might have generally been regarded as worthless. And if you truly value them, like love in Elizabeth Barret Browning's sonnet, you could never finish counting the ways.

Resources

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Aurelio M. Montemayor is a senior education associate in the IDRA Division of Professional Development.

IDRA Participates in Community Education Leadership Program

Felix Montes, Ph.D.

Juanita García, M.A.

IDRA research associate, Dr. Felix Montes, was among this year's graduates of the Community Education Leadership Program (CELP) in San Antonio. CELP is a 12-month fellowship that enhances collaborative cross-cultural skills of civic, business, educational and community leaders. It prepares, supports and nurtures this network of leaders so they can work collaboratively and effectively to create positive change in their culturally, ethnically and racially diversity community.

As the program begins another year, IDRA education associate, Juanita García, M.A., has been chosen to participate among the new class of fellows. IDRA has played an active role in the program by providing planning assistance, training, facilities and materials. IDRA staff have served as facilitators for sessions and helped develop the training design. IDRA's executive director, Dr. María Robledo Montecel serves on the CELP board of directors.

CELP was developed by the Institute for Educational Leadership and is partially funded by a grant from the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation. It is a national program, operating in San Antonio, Detroit, St. Louis and Washington, D.C.

"Effective community leadership for tomorrow's America demands new perspectives, skills, relationships and collaborations," commented Tony Rivera, USAA vice president and chair of the San Antonio CELP board of directors. "The purpose of CELP is to enable those to happen in our community and across the nation," he said.

CELP fellows develop skills of cross-cultural collaborative leadership. They move beyond perceived differences, learn how to identify common goals and begin to form alliances with diverse community constituencies to resolve common problems. They use their community environments as the primary context for examining and discussing community issues. Through participation in a series of on-site training activities (seminars, site visits, skills development workshops, individual and group projects), fellows gain highly practical knowledge about policies and program strategies for community improvement.

Coca-Cola VYP - continued from page 3

elements were *non-negotiable*. If you were going to operate this program, what exactly needed to be in place and what could be adapted to your particular school. The program's five instructional components (tutoring, classes for tutors, student recognition, role models, field trips) and five support components (curriculum, coordination, staff enrichment, parent involvement, evaluation) and their critical elements became the means for students deemed "at risk" of dropping out of school to not only stay in school but find meaning and success in their school lives.

Is this Program Effective?

Yes. Less than 2 percent of Valued Youth tutors drop out of school. Of the first 100 Valued Youth tutors (1984-1987), each and every one graduated from high school; 58 went on to college or a technical or business school. This takes on dramatic significance when the context is considered. In 1984, as in 1995, one out of three students were dropping out of school before graduating.

Minority, limited-English-proficient, and poor students were especially vulnerable. In IDRA's 1986 Texas Dropout Survey Project, we found that 86,000 students in Texas did not graduate from high school. Of the Hispanic students who dropped out, half did so before ever reaching the ninth grade (Cárdenas et al, 1986). Some people have asserted that all these 86,000 students transferred to other schools or out of state or "went back to Mexico." We know better. The odds of a Hispanic or African-American not graduating from high school are one in three; for non-Hispanic Whites, one in four. (National Center for Education Statistics, 1990).

Valued Youth tutors defy these odds. The program results have remained constant year after year. Tutors' grades and achievement tests scores increase, they go to school more often and visit the principal's office less often, and they feel better about themselves and about their school. The program has been so successful that it was approved by the U.S. Department of Education's Program Effectiveness Panel for inclusion in the National Diffusion Network in 1991 as a *Program That Works*. The program's media coverage just over the past five years fills several albums and reaches diverse audiences such as *Fortune*, *Financial World*, *USA Today*, *NEA Today*, and the front page of the *Washington Post*. Barbara Walters profiled the program in an ABC television special, and it will be featured in an NBC television documentary on businesses investing in effective educational programs later this year.

These are the measurable results: lower dropout rates, pre- and post-test achievement test scores, grades, absenteeism, disciplinary referral rates, standardized self-concept and quality of school life scores, teacher ratings and national recognition. Yet as important as this evidence is, it is only part of the assessment picture. "T-test" scores and "P" values are not what stopped Mark from pulling the trigger that night. What stopped him was the bond he had formed with three small children who were depending on him to see them through this school year. What stopped him was knowing that, without him, they might not make it, and they might end up sitting in a room one night with a loaded chamber. He wanted more for them.

Looking at Mark's grades that year, you would have seen that he maintained his average grades in English, mathematics and reading, and you might have concluded that the program had a nominal impact. And you would have been wrong.

Mark, like other Valued Youths across the country, are making a positive difference in their lives and in the lives of those around them. Accurately and appropriately assessing that difference means using different and more sensitive tools than "Normal Curve Equivalent Scores." It means looking at relationships and at what people say and do. One of the most powerful aspects of this program, the relationship between the tutor and the tutee, would never be factored into a traditional equation. Yet it is this relationship of mutual trust, need and responsibility that is at the program's core and is the catalyst for transformation.

Capturing a program's essence and its impact means widening the lens on our scopes. It is comparable to looking at a glass of water and trying to figure out if it is half empty or half full. The answer may not be in the glass but on whether someone is pouring or drinking. We can widen our scopes with interviews, participant observation, open-ended questions and case study interviews. We also do that by establishing our own relationship with those we are assessing. It, too, must be a relationship of mutual trust, need and responsibility. Without this relationship and sensitive tools, we are missing the total picture – a picture that shows students who are valued and who have learned to value themselves.

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Josie Danini Supik is the director of the IDRA Division of Research and Evaluation.

New Leadership Development Program Begins in San Antonio

This month, San Antonio has kicked off a new Leadership Development Program to engage students with community and leadership service opportunities. Sponsored by the San Antonio Hispanic Chamber of Commerce and the National Council of La Raza, the program will develop skilled pools of leaders for private and public service on policy and decision making boards and commissions that affect the community. IDRA's executive director, María Robledo Montecel, Ph.D., is a member of the program's steering committee.

The program involves a nine-month commitment by students to serve and learn practical first-hand knowledge from a skilled expert in the community. Participant's interest and skills will be combined strategically with the needs of Hispanic community-based organizations, governmental and non-profit organizations. Other participants will serve in a volunteer or appointed leadership capacity on local public or private policy-making boards.

After it is piloted this year, the program will be expanded to include more students and businesses. For information on participating next year, contact the San Antonio Hispanic Chamber of Commerce at 210/225-0462.

One constant element in student achievement is parental involvement. Research and analysis of the past 15 years conclusively demonstrate that when parents are involved in their children's education, children do better in school, and the schools do better, too. IDRA believes that parents are intelligent and want the best education for their children. Parents of all socio-economic levels and all cultural groups can participate meaningfully in their children's schools. They can act as a driving force for innovations that improve the education of their children. IDRA helps parents and schools examine ways in which they can make a difference in their students' academic success.

SILENT PARTNERS IN EDUCATION

Conchi Salas, B.A.

There are many ways of developing highly motivated, academically strong students in the classroom. Parental involvement is an area that has been tapped but not to its fullest. It remains an extremely important piece of the pedagogical system and to students' success in school. Evidence shows that students are higher achievers when their parents become more involved in education. Barbara Goodson and Robert Hess found, "The program involving parents as teachers consistently produced significant immediate gains in children's IQ scores and seemed to alter in a positive direction the teaching behavior of parents" (1975).

As research has continued to show, parents and family are "critical factors" in children's education, "particularly those who are at risk of dropping out of school" (Haley and Berry, 1988). All parents, especially those of minority students, have a crucial role in the education of their children. Students come to teachers with a wealth of experiences they have gained from their parents: culture, language, behavior, etc. Dorothy Rich states, "What children bring to school – background and environment – is critically important in the learning process" (1987).

A study conducted in Maryland by Joyce Epstein on parental involvement resulted in students whose teachers were advocates of parental involvement and who showed more gains in their reading scores than in any other subject (1984). This was a result of parents and children reading together. It is extremely important that schools and teachers acknowledge these contributions and make every effort to incorporate parents' willingness and desire for a better future for their children into their classrooms.

Maureen Botrie and Pat Wenger write in their book, *Parents and Teachers Together:*

> Parents have a vested interest in seeing their children succeed. Therefore, they are a committed resource requiring direction... If we don't help parents understand how to support their child's learning, we affect equity of outcomes in education (1992).

It is true, parents *do* want their children to succeed in school. They *do* want their children to become leaders in the community and study to be attorneys, doctors and engineers. For example, one parent told IDRA: "We expect that our children have a better future, and the hope is that with this program, our children will better themselves and get better grades." Another said, "My expectations are for my children to finish school and be respected like a teacher, doctor or lawyer" (Robledo Montecel, et al., 1993).

The Role of Schools as Partners with Parents

Because actions speak louder than words, many schools presume that parents are not concerned with their children's education because they do not attend parent/teacher meetings or assist with the assignments taken home. Dr. José A. Cárdenas, founder and director emeritus of IDRA, adds:

> Parents care about their children's education, more than school personnel sometimes realize... In fact, obstacles and misunderstandings between home and school are more frequent than not for Hispanic families, and the repercussions of clashing values beget more obstacles and misunderstandings (1977).

Parental involvement encompasses more than having parents show up to meetings or speaking with teachers when their children have misbehaved in class. It entails a commitment in school and at home. Making parents feel important to the education of their children is the key to unlocking the silence: "Not only must *children* be recognized and valued by their schools, but so must their *parents* and *families*. The hopes, sacrifices and contributions that families make should never be overlooked or undervalued" (IDRA, 1993).

If schools and administrators want to successfully incorporate parents into the classroom, properly designing a parental program is very important. In its recent publication, *Hispanic Families as Valued Partners*, IDRA has developed criteria for a successful parental program (Robledo Montecel, et al., 1993). Major steps that should be taken include:

- Assess the status quo of the campus.
- Establish a philosophy that values all students and a vision for family involvement.
- Form a team for change.
- Enable "buying into" the new philosophy.
- Survey parents' needs.
- Develop a framework for family involvement.

School administrators have an important role in developing family involvement in their schools. *Hispanic Families as Valued Partners* explains these steps in detail. It also provides specific information on the administrator's role in developing family involvement in schools. Possible roles of administrators include advisor, advocate, catalyst, insider, interface, problem-solver or solution-giver, process-helper, resource-linker, spokes-person, supporter and team member.

***Silent Partners** - continued on page 16*

Conchi Salas

VALUED YOUTHS: SIX YEARS LATER

I have only been with IDRA for two years, but, in that short time, I have had the opportunity to see just why the Coca-Cola Valued Youth Program is such a success. For the past 10 years, the Coca-Cola Valued Youth Program has been helping students, who would otherwise fall through the cracks and who are labeled "at-risk," to shine.

The basic idea of this program, and all other programs at IDRA, is that *all* students are valuable: *all* students can succeed and excel if they are given the support needed to soar to excellence. The Coca-Cola Valued Youth Program has done just that. It has helped more than 5,000 students in both elementary and secondary schools become "valued" students, and the success of the program continues to grow every year.

I had the opportunity to meet students who had been tutors in the earlier years of the program and to hear their experiences before, during and, especially, after the tutoring program. The students I met either had completed or are completing their education, despite all odds.

Diana...

Diana* is in the 11th grade at Options In Education in McAllen, Texas. Neither of her parents graduated from high school. Her mother is a housewife, and her father is an electrician. Diana has one sister who is going to college and studying to be a medical assistant. Diana knows that graduating from high school is the key to a successful future: *"That's the only way you will ever be able to succeed in life. Getting an education is very important to me."* However, graduating from high school was not always important to Diana: *"I always wanted to drop out. I never liked school. Maybe it was just laziness, but I never liked going to school even when I was small."* She changed her mind about school when she went to Options. Her schedule was more flexible and easier to handle.

This is Diana's second semester to tutor. She feels that the program has helped her: *"It did help me to start going over. It gave me more of a responsibility to come to school every day."* Diana also knows that the program has helped her personally: *"Yes. I used to have a low self-esteem. And when I started tutoring the kids, I mean they really look up to you. Any little thing you do or you don't, or you don't come, they notice everything. It just feels good."* She is proud of herself: *"I know that I can succeed. I'm more responsible. I just really believe in myself. I feel good in helping people. It's something that I really like to do."*

This change that has occurred with Diana has also affected her home life: *"I have a different attitude towards my parents. I respect them more. I obey them more. I really work on my school work more."* Her parents have noticed a change and they're surprised about the way she is acting: *"They like it. It brings me to school everyday and teaches me to be responsible and be there to help them [the children]. And they think it is really good."*

Diana's goal is to graduate from high school, attend Pan American University and study law. Diana adds that the Coca-Cola Valued Youth Program, *"is really good 'cause it brings someone's self-esteem up. With all the little kids looking up to you, it makes you feel like a role model. It really helps your self-esteem."*

Martha...

Martha* is 19 years old now and has fond memories of her experiences as a tutor. She remembers coming from Mexico and entering school not knowing a word of English. She was very shy when the teacher coordinator encouraged her to join the program at her school. Within no time, Martha was forming strong bonds with her tutees: *"As soon as I would open the door, they would all run towards me and they would hug me and kiss me. When it was time to leave, they wouldn't want me to leave. They would cry... They did show me a lot of love and a lot of respect. They called me teacher. That made me feel great; like I was really wanted at some place and at some time. I already knew where I was wanted."*

During her first year of tutoring, Martha was selected to go to Austin, Texas, and make a presentation of the program to the governor and other state officials: *"I guess I did succeed because I was the guest speaker and telling them what the program was about and what the kids were about. I'm proud of myself for making that presentation because that's what it was for, to make the program grow."*

When Martha moved on to high school, she participated in sports and joined the ROTC and became an officer; her grades continued to increase. But, she eventually became pregnant and now has a one-year-old daughter to take care of. She has had some trouble continuing with school and taking care of her daughter when she becomes ill: *"I know that both of these are important, but my baby comes first. I really want to graduate. I want that diploma and I'm going to get it. I know I'm going to graduate."* Martha walked across the stage in May 1994 to receive her diploma.

Conchi Salas is a research assistant in IDRA Division of Research and Evaluation.

**Name changed for privacy.*

Source: *Valued Youth Program Mentor Guide 1993-94*, Brownsville ISD, Brownsville, Texas

How to be Happy in High School

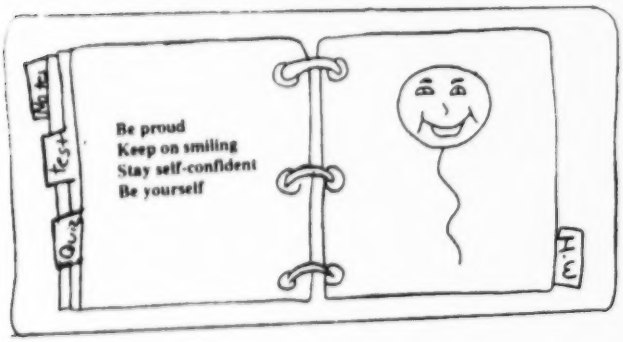

Illustration by Juan Gonzalez

Source: *Coca-Cola Valued Youth Program Mentor's Tips for Success in High School*, August 1994.

How to Motivate a Tutor

Source: *Valued Youth Program Mentor Guide 1993-94*, Brownsville ISD, Brownsville, Texas.

Source: *Valued Youth Program Mentor Guide 1993-94*, Brownsville ISD, Brownsville, Texas

Attrition Analyses - continued from page 1

The number of students lost from public high school enrollment has increased from 1985-86 to 1991-92. The number of students (in grades nine through 12) lost from public school enrollment through attrition increased from about 86,000 in 1985-86 to about 122,700 in 1994-95.

By contrast, TEA found that the number of students (in grades seven through 12) leaving the state's public education system declined consistently from 91,307 in 1987-88 to 43,402 in 1992-93.

Ethnic minority students were more likely to be lost from school enrollment than were White non-Hispanic students, when adjusted for population size. Hispanic and African American students, respectively, were 1.7 times more likely to be lost from public high school enrollment through attrition than were White students. Native American students were 1.4 times more likely to be lost from public high school enrollment through attrition than were White students. Asian American students were 1.7 times less likely to be lost from public high school enrollment through attrition than were White students.

For the 1992-93 school year, TEA found that Hispanics were 2.5 times more likely to dropout out of school than were White students; African Americans were 2.1 times more likely to drop out of school than were White students; other students (Native American and Asian American students) were 1.2 times more likely to drop out of school than were White students.

More males were lost from public high school enrollment through attrition than were females. Fifty-six percent of students lost from public high school enrollment were male, and 44 percent were female. For each race-ethnic group, males were more likely to be lost from school enrollment due to attrition than were females. The difference in the percent of males and females lost through attrition was particularly acute for African Americans.

In its study of 1992-93 dropout statistics, TEA found that about 58 percent of the dropouts were male, and about 42 percent of dropouts were female.

IDRA's Findings Contradict TEA's Findings

IDRA's findings show that the number and percent of students lost from enrollment

Attrition Rates - continued on page 15

High School Completion and School Dropout Rates

	High School Completion*		School Dropout**
	19-20 year-olds	23-24 year-olds	
Alabama	82	80	13
Alaska	85	90	11
Arizona	80	81	14
Arkansas	83	82	33
California	77	77	14
Colorado	87	88	10
Connecticut	88	89	9
Delaware	88	88	10
District of Columbia	83	84	14
Florida	79	82	14
Georgia	80	82	14
Hawaii	91	93	8
Idaho	86	86	10
Illinois	86	86	11
Indiana	86	86	11
Iowa	93	92	7
Kansas	89	89	9
Kentucky	82	81	13
Louisiana	81	79	13
Maine	90	89	8
Maryland	86	87	11
Massachusetts	90	89	8
Michigan	86	88	10
Minnesota	92	93	6
Mississippi	83	80	12
Missouri	85	86	11
Montana	89	89	8
Nebraska	92	92	7
Nevada	78	80	15
New Hampshire	87	88	9
New Jersey	86	88	10
New Mexico	82	82	12
New York	86	85	10
North Carolina	85	85	13
North Dakota	95	94	5
Ohio	87	87	9
Oklahoma	86	85	10
Oregon	83	84	12
Pennsylvania	89	88	9
Rhode Island	87	85	11
South Carolina	84	83	12
South Dakota	91	91	8
Tennessee	81	81	13
Texas	80	79	13
Utah	87	90	9
Vermont	90	88	8
Virginia	86	86	10
Washington	85	87	11
West Virginia	85	81	11
Wisconsin	90	90	7
Wyoming	90	90	7
United States	86[a]	87[b]	11[c]

*Percent of all adults with a high school credential, 1990
**Percent of all 16-19 year olds without a credential, 1990
[a]Percent of young adults 19-20 with a high school credential, 1993
[b]Percent of young adults 23-24 with a high school credential, 1993
[c]Percent of young adults 16-24 without a high school credential, 1993

Source: National Education Goals Panel, *1994 National Education Goals Report, Volume 1 and Volume 2*

Attrition Rates in Texas Public Schools: By Race-Ethnicity, 1994-95

County Name	Attrition Rates[1]			
	Black	White	Hispanic	Total
Anderson	54	30	64	38
Andrews	12	37	38	37
Angelina	23	30	30	29
Aransas	64	35	56	42
Archer	100	26		28
Armstrong		42		38
Atascosa	100	29	46	40
Austin	26	26	59	31
Bailey	25	24	53	41
Bandera	100	38	56	40
Bastrop	41	37	55	41
Baylor	100	25	63	34
Bee	43	32	48	43
Bell	38	26	39	30
Bexar	48	25	50	42
Blanco	**	28	**	20
Borden		**	17	**
Bosque	42	38	33	37
Bowie	38	28	49	31
Brazoria	51	41	60	46
Brazos	49	32	57	39
Brewster	**	12	14	12
Briscoe		40	30	29
Brooks		39	40	39
Brown	50	30	46	34
Burleson	18	23	19	21
Burnet	55	42	61	46
Caldwell	55	42	47	46
Calhoun	48	36	63	47
Callahan		33	35	34
Cameron	60	33	49	48
Camp	15	24	42	22
Carson		14	15	14
Cass	19	29	25	27
Castro	52	1	45	30
Chambers	40	32	53	35
Cherokee	36	32	71	36
Childress	44	31	57	37
Clay		18	73	21
Cochran	49	31	57	45
Coke		16	63	30
Coleman	31	27	19	26
Collin	39	22	49	26
Collingsworth	**	28	36	26
Colorado	30	17	32	23
Comal	6	21	42	27
Comanche		5	39	14
Concho		15	15	14
Cooke	47	28	55	31
Corvell	49	31	27	33
Cottle	100	3	12	13
Crane	29	22	22	23
Crockett	**	10	34	26
Crosby	51	33	40	39
Culberson		30	12	17
Dallam	100	14	52	25
Dallas	52	29	63	44
Dawson	44	20	37	30
Deaf Smith	18	**	43	26
Delta	**	21	27	16

County Name	Attrition Rates[1]			
	Black	White	Hispanic	Total
Denton	49	33	56	36
Dewitt	38	16	41	25
Dickens	17	9	51	22
Dimmit	100	51	40	42
Donley	59	21	100	25
Duval	67	**	22	23
Eastland	62	23	57	29
Ector	34	32	54	42
Edwards		41	25	33
Ellis	42	33	59	38
El Paso	57	28	43	41
Erath	100	25	46	29
Falls	30	34	46	35
Fannin	19	23	6	23
Fayette	33	27	33	28
Fisher	**	27	**	13
Floyd	**	4	36	23
Foard	**	14	5	10
Fort Bend	49	28	54	40
Franklin	20	35	43	35
Freestone	28	28	69	28
Frio	**	16	33	30
Gaines	24	19	23	21
Galveston	54	31	55	39
Garza	35	21	39	29
Gillespie	75	19	32	22
Glasscock		**	64	6
Goliad	**	40	39	35
Gonzales	34	29	39	34
Gray	22	25	53	29
Grayson	43	30	28	31
Gregg	50	27	66	35
Grimes	43	39	59	44
Guadalupe	35	28	56	39
Hale	29	30	40	35
Hall	31	9	39	25
Hamilton		31	**	27
Hansford		10	48	22
Hardeman	**	19	43	23
Hardin	38	14	21	34
Harris	57	33	62	48
Harrison	41	36	27	37
Hartley		**		**
Haskell	10	23	11	20
Hays	62	33	50	41
Hemphill		12	43	18
Henderson	38	31	49	32
Hidalgo	65	25	49	48
Hill	13	24	54	25
Hockley	**	17	37	25
Hood	41	36	61	38
Hopkins	41	23	65	28
Houston	50	30	21	37
Howard	35	25	38	30
Hudspeth		11	47	38
Hunt	38	33	64	35
Hutchinson	50	30	48	33
Irion		27	51	34
Jack		26	73	31
Jackson	52	32	53	38

[1]Calculated by: (1) dividing the high school enrollment in the end year by the high school enrollment in the base year; (2) multiplying the results from Calculation 1 by the ninth grade enrollment in the base year; (3) subtracting the results from Calculation 2 from the 12th grade enrollment in the end year; and (4) dividing the results of Calculation 3 by the result of Calculation 2. The attrition rate results (percentages) were rounded to the nearest whole number.

** = Attrition rate is less than zero (0).

, = The necessary data are unavailable to calculate the attrition rate.

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Attrition Rates in Texas Public Schools:
By Race-Ethnicity, 1994-95 (continued)

County Name	Attrition Rates[1] Black	White	Hispanic	Total
Jasper	28	32	57	32
Jeff Davis	100	53	62	62
Jefferson	53	30	53	42
Jim Hogg			32	29
Jim Wells	**	26	32	31
Johnson	54	37	37	39
Jones	68	22	41	31
Karnes	17	14	38	29
Kaufman	38	37	56	38
Kendall	100	18	55	27
Kent		10	58	21
Kerr	56	25	53	35
Kimble		40	**	27
King		**	25	**
Kinney	100	57	61	60
Kleberg	**	24	44	38
Knox	29	**	42	14
Lamar	22	20	13	21
Lamb	35	26	43	34
Lampasas	76	28	36	32
La Salle		19	30	28
Lavaca	23	10	38	14
Lee	35	29	67	36
Leon	35	24	64	27
Liberty	40	40	55	40
Limestone	34	28	65	34
Lipscomb		8	35	13
Live Oak		20	49	33
Llano		22	59	24
Lubbock	34	21	37	28
Lynn	**	13	43	31
Madison	54	30	66	41
Marion	37	44	25	39
Martin	33	40	43	41
Mason		20	*	17
Matagorda	40	36	53	41
Maverick		**	27	26
McCulloch	38	10	2	8
McLennan	56	29	64	43
McMullen		21	33	15
Medina	100	26	45	36
Menard		**	49	8
Midland	35	26	49	34
Milam	34	22	39	28
Miles		17	40	24
Mitchell	24	39	31	35
Montague		25	42	26
Montgomery	45	34	49	36
Moore		16	43	27
Morris	18	26	15	24
Motley	20	**	46	7
Nacogdoches	56	28	78	39
Navarro	26	22	47	25
Newton	16	33		29
Nolan	40	21	50	33
Nueces	49	30	46	41
Ochiltree		19	42	24
Oldham		13	61	21
Orange	53	33	27	35
Palo Pinto	62	34	62	40
Panola	37	29	94	33
Parker	46	40	48	40
Parmer	**	10	43	27
Pecos		24	37	33
Polk	47	44	58	44
Potter	64	33	65	43
Presidio		16	48	46

County Name	Attrition Rates[1] Black	White	Hispanic	Total
Rains	22	36		36
Randall	42	26	61	29
Reagan	46	21	35	31
Real		28	21	28
Red River	13	15	82	17
Reeves	45	22	36	34
Refugio	21	16	39	27
Roberts		**	**	**
Robertson	43	23	46	33
Rockwall	31	40	68	42
Runnels	48	16	46	27
Rusk	34	26	42	29
Sabine	2	34	100	29
San Augustine	32	21	74	28
San Jacinto	34	41	49	40
San Patricio	49	31	46	40
San Saba		25	24	25
Schleicher		28	16	22
Scurry	31	22	48	31
Shackelford		9	69	16
Shelby	23	29	54	28
Sherman		14	**	10
Smith	36	26	64	33
Somervell		20	13	18
Starr		**	47	47
Stephens	100	31	44	34
Sterling		18	41	26
Stonewall	**	20	65	23
Sutton	100	15	3	11
Swisher	20	24	27	25
Tarrant	50	31	55	37
Taylor	34	29	44	32
Terrell		14	17	14
Terry	47	12	61	40
Throckmorton		13	18	13
Titus	41	26	72	38
Tom Green	33	22	38	28
Travis	57	33	65	48
Trinity	52	40	100	44
Tyler	16	28	**	25
Upshur	40	38	67	39
Upton	50	15	18	17
Uvalde		23	35	32
Val Verde	68	34	40	40
Van Zandt	21	25	45	25
Victoria	41	27	56	42
Walker	42	31	56	37
Waller	55	43	64	51
Ward	42	12	23	19
Washington	48	18	32	28
Webb	**	31	45	44
Wharton	33	17	38	27
Wheeler	65	**	58	8
Wichita	30	19	42	23
Wilbarger	37	23	59	31
Willacy	100	3	39	38
Williamson	48	31	49	45
Wilson	**	24	38	29
Winkler	40	39	37	38
Wise	63	28	41	30
Wood	37	26	59	28
Yoakum	**	14	33	22
Young	37	27	60	32
Zapata		14	26	25
Zavala		8	36	36
STATE TOTAL	50	30	51	40

Longitudinal Attrition Rates in Texas Public High Schools 1985-1986 to 1994-1995

Race-Ethnicity Group	1985-1986	1986-1987	1987-1988	1988-1989	1989-1990	1991-1992	1992-1993	1994-1995	Percent Change From 1985-86 To 1994-95
Native American	45	39	37	47	39	40	39	42	-7
Asian/Pacific Islander	33	30	28	23	22	21	21	18	-45
Black	34	38	39	37	38	39	43	50	+47
White	27	26	24	20	19	22	25	30	+11
Hispanic	45	46	49	48	48	48	49	51	+13
Total	33	34	33	31	31	34	36	40	+21

Figures calculated by IDRA from Texas Education Agency *Fall Membership Survey* data.

Attrition Analyses - continued from page 12

in Texas public schools has increased from the initial study in 1985-86 to the most recent study for 1994-95. But TEA's findings show a decreasing dropout rate.

Obviously, the methodologies employed by IDRA and TEA to obtain the estimates of the number of students who leave school prior to graduation are different. IDRA conducts *attrition analyses* of enrollment figures at two points in time (ninth grade and 12th grade enrollment four years later). TEA reports *dropout data* for each school year provided by school districts through the PEIMS.

Another factor involves the recent changes in the state's methodology. Each year, school districts are required to report to TEA the number of students who have dropped out of school that year. The dropout recovery process has recently been expanded to exclude from those numbers students who meet any of the following conditions (TEA, 1995):

- Students who have remained enrolled in public school somewhere in the state [according to the school district attendance and enrollment information provided through the PEIMS]. Unfortunately, this system does not efficiently track students and, thus, causes the under reporting of dropouts.
- Students who have received a General Educational Development (GED) certificate and appear on the GED information file at the time the recovery procedures are executed. In effect, this equates completion of a GED program with classroom study and high school graduation. IDRA takes strong exception to this concept that if a student quits school and subsequently obtains a GED, the student was never a school dropout (Cárdenas, 1994).
- Students who have graduated within the last year.
- Students who were expelled for criminal behavior occurring on school property or at school related functions (if the student was incarcerated, that student is not reported as a dropout). IDRA is concerned that too many school districts relinquish their responsibility to educate these students. Juvenile justice systems and school districts need to work together, as they do in a handful of locations, to make sure these children are educated.
- Students who were identified as dropouts

Attrition Analyses - continued on page 17

Enrollment Data

Race-Ethnicity Group	1991-92 9th Grade Enrollment[a]	1991-92 9th - 12th Enrollment[a]	1994-95 12th Grade Enrollment[b]	1994-95 9th - 12th Enrollment[b]
Native American	564	1,722	412	2,162
Male	304	903	203	1,112
Female	260	819	209	1,050
Asian/Pacific Islander	5,922	21,410	5,597	24,674
Male	3,115	11,182	2,808	12,562
Female	2,807	10,228	2,789	12,112
Hispanic	102,247	288,393	55,537	317,931
Male	54,244	148,489	27,446	163,312
Female	48,003	139,904	28,091	154,619
Black	41,788	122,040	22,869	133,586
Male	21,690	61,317	10,852	66,404
Female	20,098	60,723	12,017	67,182
White	134,100	454,413	99,089	476,892
Male	69,386	232,517	49,956	244,522
Female	64,714	221,896	49,133	232,370
Total	284,621	887,978	183,504	955,245
Male	148,739	454,408	91,265	487,912
Female	135,882	433,570	92,239	467,333

[a]Enrollment data from the Texas Education Agency's 1991 *Fall Membership Survey*.
[b]Enrollment data from the Texas Education Agency's 1994 *Fall Membership Survey*.

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Current Dropout Definitions in Texas

What is a Dropout?

Definition: A student is identified as a dropout if he or she is absent for 30 or more consecutive days without approved excuse or documented transfer or if he or she fails to re-enroll during the first 30 consecutive days in the following semester.

Students in the following categories are identified as dropouts:

- Students who dropout out as defined by the 30 day absence rule stated in law,
- Students who enter the military,
- Students from special education, ungraded or alternative education programs who drop out,
- Students who leave school and enter a program not qualifying as an elementary or secondary school (i.e., cosmetology school), and
- Students enrolled as migrants and whose whereabouts are unknown.

Students in the following categories are not included as dropouts:

- Students who die,
- Students who drop out as defined by the 30 day absence rule before the seventh grade,
- Students who are out of school for temporary periods with an approved excuse,
- Students showing regular attendance at a state-approved alternative program,
- Students enrolled as migrants who have subsequent school enrollment records (a Migrant Student Record Transfer System [MSRTS] education record is available),
- Students known to have transferred to another public school, adult or alternative education program, or home schooling,
- Students who move to another grade level,
- Students who enroll in college early, and
- Students transferred or assigned to another public institution or state-approved educational program.

How is the Dropout Rate Calculated?

$$\frac{\text{\# dropouts}}{\text{total 7-12 grade October enrollment*}} = \text{Annual Dropout Rate**}$$

* Until this year, TEA used cumulative enrollment numbers, which count students who were in school at any time during the school year.

** Also called the event dropout rate.

Source: Texas Education Agency, *1992-93 Report on Public School Dropouts*, January 1995

Silent Partners *- continued from page 9*

One of the many programs IDRA has successfully implemented is the Coca-Cola Valued Youth Program (see Page 3). A critical component of the program is parental involvement. The goal is to empower parents and families through outreach and meaningful school activities. In April 1995, IDRA hosted parents at its Coca-Cola Valued Youth Program Fifth Annual National Training Seminar and Valued Youth Conference held in San Antonio. Parents were brought together with students and teachers from across the United States. These parents shared their views on how they could become more involved in their children's education and in schools to make a difference. They also expressed that because of the Coca-Cola Valued Youth Program they had become more connected with their children and their children's schools.

Parents are a crucial component in the education of their children. It is of utmost importance that schools open their doors and include parents in their efforts to educate young people. Schools cannot afford to leave parents in silence. Parents as valued partners are a vital resource.

Coming Up!

In November-December, the *IDRA Newsletter* focuses on Technology.

Resources

Botrie, Maureen and Pat Wenger. *Teachers and Parents Together* (Markham, Ontario: Pembroke Publishers Limited, 1992).

Cárdenas, José A. and Blandina Cárdenas. *The Theory of Incompatibilities* (San Antonio, Texas: Intercultural Development Research Association, 1977).

Epstein, Joyce. *Improving American Education: Roles for Parents.* Testimony for the Select Committee on Children, Youth and Families. (Washington D.C.: U.S. House of Representatives, 1984).

Goodson, Barbara and Robert Hess. *Parents as Teachers of Young Children: An Evaluative Review of Some Contemporary Concepts and Programs* (Palo Alto, Calif.: Stanford University, 1975).

Haley, Paul and Karen Berry. *Home and School as Partners: Helping Parents Help Their Children.* Andover, Mass.: The Regional Laboratory for Educational Improvement of the Northeast and Islands, 1988).

Intercultural Development Research Association. *Families in Schools: Parents' Dialogues Towards Student Success* (San Antonio, Texas: Intercultural Development Research Association, 1993).

Rich, Dorothy. *Schools and Families: Issues and Action* (Washington, D.C.: National Education Association, 1987).

Robledo Montecel, Maria, Aurora Gallagher, Aurelio Montemayor, Abelardo Villarreal, Ninta Adame-Reyna and Josie D. Supik. *Hispanic Families as Valued Partners: An Educator's Guide* (San Antonio, Texas: Intercultural Development Research Association, 1993).

Conchi Salas is a research assistance in the IDRA Division of Research and Evaluation.

Attrition Analyses - continued from page 15

at any time back to the 1990-91 school year, the first year that student identification data were collected along with the dropout record. This is TEA's way of ensuring that each student is only counted once. But, since some students drop out more than once, this change hinders a complete picture of a school district's record in recovering and retaining students.

A third factor causing different findings by TEA and IDRA involves TEA's methodology for determining the annual, or *event*, dropout rate. TEA changed the data source it uses to calculate the rates. They now must use *cumulative* instead of *fall* enrollment data. The cumulative figure is a larger number and subsequently produces a smaller dropout rate than the fall enrollment data.

Implications

With the attention focused on dropouts over the past decade, it is readily apparent that either the state's dropout problem has improved drastically or the improvement is drastically exaggerated. IDRA's findings that the problem is worsening reflects what we are hearing in the field from teachers and others. Dropout statistics and the methodologies must continue to be monitored to ensure that they are used in ways that improve the education of all children. By all means, the dropout prevention strategies must not be minimized, and considerable attention must focused on keeping students in school.

Resources

Texas Education Agency. *1992-93 Report on Public School Dropouts* (Austin, Texas: TEA, January 1995).

Cardenas, Jose A., Maria del Refugio Robledo and Josie Supik. *Texas School Dropout Survey Project* (San Antonio, Texas: Intercultural Development Research Association, 1986).

Cardenas, Jose A. "Hispanic Dropouts: Report by General Accounting Office Has Problems." *IDRA Newsletter* (San Antonio, Texas: Intercultural Development Research Association, October 1994), XXI(9), pp. 4-5, 15.

Roy Johnson is a senior research associate in the IDRA Division of Research Association.

IDRA's Attrition Model

IDRA conducted the first comprehensive analysis of school dropouts in the state of Texas in 1986. This research effort was conducted by IDRA under contract with the Texas Department of Community Affairs (now Texas Department of Commerce) and the Texas Education Agency (TEA) with Dr. María Robledo Montecel serving as the principle investigator. The study was conducted during the period of May 1986 through October 1986 and focused on the magnitude of the dropout problem, the economic impact of the school dropouts, and the nature and effectiveness of dropout prevention programs in Texas. The study's findings were published in a multi-volume report, *Texas School Dropout Survey Project* (Cárdenas, J., et al, 1986).

IDRA has developed a technique for estimating the number of students lost from Texas public schools as a result of attrition. The formula for computing the longitudinal attrition rates consists of taking grade level enrollment for a base year and comparing these figures to grade level enrollment in a subsequent (or end) year, with the assumption that a decline in the number of students enrolled constitutes the attrition rate for the school or district and that the *cohort attrition rate* is closely related to the annual dropout rate. IDRA's cohort longitudinal attrition analyses allow for increases and decreases in a district's enrollment figures since district enrollment may vary from school year to school year.

Enrollment data used in the study were obtained from the Texas Education Agency's *Fall Membership Survey*. Results are presented for 252 of the 254 Texas counties; two counties (Kenedy and Loving) did not have high schools.

***Youth Leadership** - continued from page 5*

- Youth leadership actions will directly influence school transformation.

Tomorrow's leaders are found in today's classrooms, truly great works in progress. Yet many youth leaders are like rough diamonds needing to be brought out and polished, prepared to assume their rightful places around the decision making tables of today and tomorrow.

Youth leadership in a school district or campus can happen through this IDRA program for those who are willing to commit the resources. Along with the financial resources this program requires the following:

- A team of educators who act upon their beliefs that students can be leaders, especially those not usually considered for leadership roles;
- A willingness to expand the variety of activities that will allow students to show leadership and reveal their intrinsic value;
- A network of adults supporting experimentation with non-traditional activities;
- Delegation of responsibility to students and allowance for experimentation and mistakes;
- Acceptance of interruptions, digressions and alternate paths in the traditional curriculum and scheduling;
- Encouragement of validation and positive interaction among students with labels of limitation; and
- Allowance of student choices and decisions, even when these seem trivial or unimportant to adults.

We know that the resources and the willingness are there. Our belief is reaffirmed yearly in our work with hundreds of schools. We all want to hear students say, as they do in the Coca-Cola Valued Youth Program, "I'm a responsible person and I can contribute. I proved it through what I did this year. I am an important community leader."

Aurelio Montemayor is a senior education associate in the IDRA Division of Professional Development. Josie Danini Supik is the director of the IDRA Division of Research and Evaluation.

RESOURCES ON YOUTH LEADERSHIP

ADDITIONAL READINGS AND INFORMATION

LEADERSHIP CAN ENGAGE YOUNG PEOPLE INTENSELY AND DEEPLY, LIBERATING THEIR BEST ENERGIES.

- Dorothy Stoneman, president, YouthBuild. Quoted in* A New Vision: Promoting Youth Development, *September 1991.

Cárdenas, José A. "**Addressing School Dropouts.**" *IDRA Newsletter* (San Antonio, Texas: Intercultural Development Research Association, August 1989), XVI(8), pp. 4-8.

Cárdenas, José A. "**Hispanic Dropouts: Report by General Accounting Office Has Problems.**" *IDRA Newsletter* (San Antonio, Texas: Intercultural Development Research Association, October 1994), XXI(9), pp. 4-5, 15.

Clements, Barbara S. "What Is a Dropout?" *The School Administrator* (March 1990), pp. 18-22.

De Luna, Anna. "**Invisible Girls: The Other Half of America's Dropout Problem.**" *IDRA Newsletter* (San Antonio, Texas: Intercultural Development Research Association, October 1994), XXI(9), pp. 11, 13.

Johnson, Roy. "**Attrition Rates Are Going Up: Texas Rates Higher Than National Average.**" *IDRA Newsletter* (San Antonio, Texas: Intercultural Development Research Association, October 1994), XXI(9), pp. 6-9, 15.

Montes, Felix. "**Innovative Technology Supports 'Prevention and Recovery of Student Dropouts' Collection.**" *IDRA Newsletter* (San Antonio, Texas: Intercultural Development Research Association, October 1994), XXI(9), pp. 12-13.

Robledo Montecel, Maria and Aurelio M. Montemayor. "**Successful Schooling and At-Risk Youth: Research Findings and Recommendations.**" IDRA Newsletter (San Antonio, Texas: Intercultural Development Research Association, August 1990), XVII(7), pp. 5-7.

Robledo Montecel, Maria, Josie D. Supik and José A. Cárdenas. "**Improving Student Performance: Study Identifies Better Approach.**" *IDRA Newsletter* (San Antonio, Texas: Intercultural Development Research Association, October 1994), XXI(9), pp. 1, 14.

Supik, Josie D. "**The Coca-Cola Valued Youth Program: An Idea That Works.**" *IDRA Newsletter* (San Antonio, Texas: Intercultural Development Research Association, October 1994), XXI(9), pp. 3, 16-17.

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FAMILIES IN SCHOOLS

by Maria Robledo Montecel, Ph.D. and IDRA Staff

A testament to parents' convictions and determination that their children will have a better life than they have had and a testament to parents' willingness to become partners with their children's schools.

26 Pages; $4.50
1993; Paperback; No ISBN

TEXAS SCHOOL DROPOUT SURVEY PROJECT: A SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

by José A. Cárdenas, Ed.D., Maria del Refugio Robledo, Ph.D. and Josie Supik, M.A.

This publication presents the magnitude and economic impact of the dropout crisis in Texas. It also addresses the diversity of the dropout population and the lack of dropout prevention programs with demonstrated effectiveness.

81 Pages; $7.00
October 31, 1986; Paperback; ISBN#1-878550-37-3

VALUED YOUTH ANTHOLOGY: ARTICLES ON DROPOUT PREVENTION

A compendium of *IDRA Newsletter* articles from 1986-12989, this publication addresses the dropout problem, the implementation of dropout prevention programs, undereducated youth and illiteracy. Other subjects, such as limited-English-proficient students, are also included.

108 Pages; $5.00
1989 First Edition; Quality Paperback; ISBN#1-878550-27-6

SCHEDULE OF IDRA TRAINING AND WORKSHOP ACTIVITIES

OCTOBER 1 - OCTOBER 31, 1995

This list includes activities that have been scheduled for particular school districts and other groups. They are not open to the public. For information on scheduling a similar event for your school district or other group, contact IDRA at 210/684-8180

DATE	SCHOOL DISTRICT/AGENCY	TOPIC
Oct. 2	Livingston Independent School District (ISD)	Embracing Cultural Diversity in School
	Rio Grande City Consolidated ISD (CISD)	Overview and Vision Statement – WOCAM (World Class Achievement in Math)
Oct. 3	Española Public Schools, New Mexico	Bilingual Education and the Law
Oct. 3-4	Ector County ISD	Content Based Strategies for Nonbilingual Elementary and Secondary Teachers
Oct. 4	Roma ISD	Reading Project – Reading Strategies and Coaching for Language Arts Teachers
	Southside ISD	Coca-Cola VYP – Tutor Observations
	Southwest ISD	Coca-Cola Valued Youth Program (VYP) – Introduction to Elementary Receiving Teachers
Oct. 5	Donna ISD	Reading Project
	Southwest ISD	Coca-Cola VYP – First Implementation Team Meeting
Oct. 6	Roma ISD	Reading Project
Oct. 9	Houston ISD	Introduction to Structures and Reading Strategies for English as a Second Language (ESL) Cluster Teachers
	Rio Grande City CISD	WOCAM Project Overview
	Roma ISD	Developing Appropriate Practices in Bilingual Education
	Roma ISD	Reading Project
Oct. 10	Southwest, Southside and South San Antonio ISDs	Coca-Cola VYP – Planning
	Taos Public Schools, New Mexico	National Origin Students and Office for Civil Rights (OCR) Requirements
Oct. 11	Gladson Public Schools, New Mexico	*Playtime Is Science* – Annual Meeting
	Harlandale ISD	Engineering, Science and Math Increases Job Aspirations (ES-MIJA) Project Implementation
Oct. 12	Arkansas State Department of Education	ESL Early Childhood Education
	Ector County ISD	Cultural Enrichment Using Spanish Reading Strategies
	Northside ISD	Technical Assistance and Classroom Visits
Oct. 13	Midland ISD	Learning Styles
	Tyler ISD	Thematic Unites for ESL
Oct. 16	Donna ISD	Coca-Cola VYP – Tutor Training
Oct. 17	Donna ISD	Reading Project
	Gallup Public Schools, New Mexico	Review Progress of OCR Mandates
	Northside ISD	Young Scientists Acquiring English (YSAE)
	McAllen ISD	Coca-Cola VYP – Training and Technical Assistance for Receiving Teachers
	Rio Grande City CISD	Demonstration Lessons and Debriefings for Math Teachers
Oct. 18	Corpus Christi, Texas	Association for Compensatory Education in Texas conference presentation
	The Center, IDRA	Training and Technical Assistance for Administrators in Home Instruction Program for Preschool Youngsters (HIPPY)
Oct. 19	Los Angeles Office of Education	Coca-Cola VYP – Observations, Training and Technical Assistance
	Roma ISD	Reading Project – Strategies and Coaching for Language Arts Teachers
	Texas State Teachers Association – Austin, Texas	Site Based Decision Management
	Zuni Public Schools, New Mexico	*Playtime Is Science* – Annual Meeting

SCHEDULE OF IDRA TRAINING AND WORKSHOP ACTIVITIES

OCTOBER 1 - OCTOBER 31, 1995

DATE	SCHOOL DISTRICT/AGENCY	TOPIC
Oct. 20	Pampa ISD	ESL Strategies in Content Areas
	Rio Grande Valley	Texas Association for Bilingual Educators – *Hijas del Quinto Sol*: Redefining Feminine Roles Through Literature Conference
	Pharr-San Juan-Alamo ISD	Thematic Units
Oct. 21	Dallas ISD	First and Second Language Acquisition
	San Antonio, Texas	Parents Reclaiming Their Schools
Oct. 24	Corpus Christi ISD	ESL Strategies – *CALLA*
	San Diego ISD	Importance of Parent Involvement
Oct. 25	Houston ISD	ESL Peer Coaching
	San Antonio ISD	Project Implementation
Oct. 27	Donna ISD	WOW (Workshop on Workshops)
	Donna ISD	Team Building
	Laredo ISD	ESL Strategies
Oct. 28	Dallas ISD	Strategies for Limited-English-Proficient (LEP) Students
	University of Texas – El Paso	Emerging Literature Conference
Oct. 30	Education Service Center (ESC) – Region X	Designing a Bilingual Education Program, and Bilingual and ESL Strategies
	Santa Maria ISD	ESL Sheltered Instruction for Content Area Teachers
Oct. 31	Oklahoma City Public Schools, Oklahoma	ESL Strategies

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